

Community Planning and Strategy
Community Care Reform

The Tasmanian Home and Community Care (HACC) Program

People less than 65 years of age (or less than 50 years
of age if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)

Client Rights and Responsibilities



Your Rights and Responsibilities as a User of the Tasmanian HACC Program

Organisations funded by the Tasmanian HACC Program are required by Government to maintain certain standards in order to provide quality care. The Rights and Responsibilities described in this leaflet are all related to those standards.

As a service user of HACC services you have a number of rights. HACC service providers should recognise your right to:

- be treated with respect and courtesy
- be informed and to be consulted
- be part of decisions made about your care
- receive good quality services
- privacy and confidentiality, and to access all personal information kept about you by your service
- have another person of your choice support you and advocate on your behalf
- have your comments valued and to make a complaint if you are not happy with the services you receive.

Your Rights as a Service User of Tasmanian HACC Services

The Right to be Treated with Respect and Courtesy

Service providers must respect your ideas and the decisions you make about your life. They should listen to what you have to say, and are expected to show courtesy in their behaviour to you. Here are some questions you can ask service providers about this right:

- Will your staff seek my consent if they want access to my personal belongings?
- Are staff expected to listen to what I have to say about my care?
- Are staff expected to talk to me in a respectful way?
- If I think that staff are not treating me with dignity, what can I do?
- Who should I speak to in the organisation?
- Who could I speak to outside of the organisation?
- How familiar is your service with my cultural background/religious beliefs?
- Will staff respect my cultural and religious beliefs?
- Are staff trained in working with people with special needs, such as people from culturally different backgrounds or people who suffer from memory loss?

The Right to be Informed and to be Consulted

As a service user you have the right to be informed about the service available to you and about your rights as a service user. These are questions that can help you obtain the information you need to get the most from a service:

- What exactly can this organisation provide for me?
- How often will I receive the service?
- For how long can I expect to receive the service?
- What will it cost me?
- Will I receive an itemised account for the service?
- Do I have a choice how to pay for the service?
- If I cannot afford the service, can I request a reduction in fees?
- Can I get the service after hours or on weekends?
- Will I have the same staff each time?
- Can I request a change of staff if I am not happy?
- What happens if I don't take up the service now and ask for it again later?
- How will I be involved in planning the services you provide to meet my needs?
- Can I stop the service at any time?
- How would I do this?
- Do you have a written copy of my rights as a service consumer?
- Can I have the information in a language other than English?
- Can I have access to an interpreter?

The Right to be Part of Decisions About Your Care

You have the right to remain in control of the care you receive by being part of the decisions made about the services provided to you. You can ask these sorts of questions:

- How will I be involved in developing the plan for my care?
- Can I have someone with me during my discussions about my care?
- Do I automatically receive a copy of my care plan?
- If my needs change, will you review my care plan with me?
- Can I ask for a male or female worker?
- Can I choose a time that suits me to receive my service?
- Can I ask my worker not to smoke in my home?
- Will you tell me in writing if there are any changes made to my service?
- To whom can I complain about changes made to my service? How would I do that?

The Right to Receive Quality Services

Your Service Provider needs to inform you about the services it can and cannot provide. You have the right to receive a planned and reliable service. To find out more about this right you can ask service provider organisations these questions:

- Do I get regular visit or phone call from the organisation to find out if I am happy with the service I am receiving?
- Do you provide clients with a copy of information about the agency?
- Do I receive a copy of my plan of care?
- Am I going to be consulted about any changes made to the service I receive?
- Is the organisation flexible about adapting services to meet my needs?
- Will I be encouraged to speak up if I have any concerns about the service I am receiving? How can I do this best?

The Right to Privacy and Confidentiality

You have the right to confidentiality and privacy, and to obtain information held about you on file. These are examples of questions you might ask service providers about this right:

- Do you have any written information about my rights regarding privacy and confidentiality?
- What sort of personal details do you keep about your clients? (For example, date of birth, income, religion)
- Where do you keep my personal information?
- Is it secure? How do you make sure it is secure?
- Who has access to my file?

- Do I have access to my file?
- What do I have to do if I want to access my file?
- Who would I talk to if I felt that my privacy or confidentiality were breached?

The Right to an Advocate

Everyone has basic rights as Australian Citizens and these include expressing your views. It can be helpful to have family or friends to speak on your behalf, or organisations whose role it is to advise people about their rights and responsibilities when receiving services, and to act on your behalf with service providers. Organisations like this are known as advocacy services, and people who act on your behalf are known as advocates.

As someone using a service funded by the Tasmanian HACC Program you have a right to involve an advocate of your choice to represent you at any time. These are examples of questions you can ask service providers regarding your right to advocacy:

- Can I have a friend, family member or person from an advocacy service to represent me at any time?
- Do you have written information about my rights as a user of your services?
- Can I have my rights explained to me by an interpreter?

- Is there an independent advocacy organisation that can tell me more about my rights as a HACC service user?
- How can I contact advocacy services at times of changes and distress?

The Right to Make a Complaint

As someone using services funded by the Tasmanian HACC Program, you have the right to give honest feedback about the service you are receiving without fear of losing the service, or having it reduced. Service Providers are required to have clear written policies for handling complaints from service users, and to make sure that their clients understand how those policies are applied. These are some questions you can ask an organisation:

- Can I discuss any concerns that I have about the service I am receiving?
- Is there a particular person in the organisation who deals with complaints? Do I have to put any concerns in writing? Or can I explain it over the phone or talk to someone in person? Is there a certain process I have to follow when complaining?
- Can I ask an advocate to speak on my behalf regarding my concerns?
- Will my complaint be kept confidential?
- Will I risk losing my service if I complain?

- If I am not happy with the result of my complaint, who else can I talk to within the organisation?
- Can I have a copy of your organisation's policy and procedures for handling complaints?

Your Responsibilities as a Service User of Tasmanian HACC Program Services

While you have a number of rights as a service user, you also have some responsibilities to the organisations and the people who provide your care.

Tasmanian HACC Program Funded Organisations ask their Clients to:

- Treat staff with respect and courtesy – for example, by letting them know as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment.
- Provide a safe work environment for staff and help them to provide you with services safely – for example, by not leaving floors wet and slippery.
- Take responsibility for the results of any decisions which you make with staff about your care.
- Inform service providers of any changes to your support needs.
- Raise issues, concerns and complaints directly with service providers in the first instance.

- Provide compliments and positive feedback directly to service providers.

For Further Information Regarding HACC Services:

Tasmanian Community Care Referral Service – **1300 769 699**

Advocacy Tasmania Inc. – **1800 005 131** (Freecall TM)

As a HACC Client you have rights and responsibilities in regard to the services you access.



Tasmanian
Government

Planning Purchasing and Performance
Department of Health and Human Services
GPO Box 960, Hobart TAS 7001